DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 092 258 40 PS 007 404

AUTHOR	Mayer, Colleen A.
TITLE	Understanding Young Children: Emotional and Behavioral Development and Disabilities.
INSTITUTION	Alaska Treatment Center for Crippled Children and Adults, Inc., Anchorage.; ERIC Clearinghouse on Early Childhood Education, Urbana, Ill.
SPONS AGENCY	Bureau of Education for the Handicapped (DHEW/OE), Washington, D.C.; National Inst. of Education (DHEW), Washington, D.C.; Office of Child Development (DHEW), Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE	Jul 74
GRANT	OEG-0-9-110305-4701
NOTE	78p.; For other documents in this series, see PS 007 403 and 405-407
AVAILABLE FROM	Publications Office I. R. E. C., College of Education, University of Illinois, 805 W. Pennsylvania Avenue, Urbana, Illinois 61801 (Catalog No. 115, $1.75)
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.75 HC-$4.20 PLUS POSTAGE
DESCRIPTORS	Behavior Problems; Developmental Psychology; Discipline; *Emotional Development; *Emotionally Disturbed Children; Hyperactivity; Interaction Process Analysis; *Preschool Children; Psychological Patterns; Self Concept; *Social Development; Social Maturity; Student Teacher Relationship; Teacher Role; *Teaching Guides; Teaching Methods

ABSTRACT

This booklet offers teachers, paraprofessionals, and parents practical, easy-to-read suggestions to help them understand emotional and behavioral development and disabilities in young children. Through a variety of examples, the booklet emphasizes techniques that show the teacher how to encourage and assist the young child to move toward emotional maturity and self-discipline. This guide should prove helpful in training teachers and caregivers who work with handicapped children in a regular classroom. Cartoon-style drawings illustrate the text. (CS)

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

ED 092258

UNDERSTANDING YOUNG CHILDREN: EMOTIONAL AND BEHAVIORAL DEVELOPMENT AND DISABILITIES

By
Colleen A. Mayer

Illustrated by
De Lana Acton and Colleen Mayer

PS 007404

Prepared at the
Alaska Treatment Center for Crippled Children and Adults
3710 East 20th Avenue
Anchorage, Alaska 99504

Helen D. Beirne, Ph.D., Project Director
Marion D. Bowles, Assistant Director

ERIC Clearinghouse on Early Childhood Education

University of Illinois
805 West Pennsylvania Avenue
Urbana, Illinois 61801

UNDERSTANDING YOUNG CHILDREN:
EMOTIONAL AND BEHAVIORAL DEVELOPMENT AND DISABILITIES

By
Colleen A. Mayer

Illustrated by
De Lana Acton and Colleen Mayer

Available from:
Publications Office/IREC
College of Education/University of Illinois
805 West Pennsylvania Avenue
Urbana, Illinois 61801

Price: $1.75 Catalog: #115

July 1974

Funded by:
Early Childhood Education Project (P.L. 91-230)
Bureau of Education for the Handicapped U.S.O.E.
Grant No. O.E.G. 0-9-110305-4701

This paper was produced pursuant to a contract with the National Institute of Education, partially supported by a contract with the Office of Child Development. Points of view or opinions stated do not necessarily represent official government position or policy.

The Understanding Young Children Series

This series of five booklets offers practical, easy-to-read suggestions for teachers, parents, and caregivers working with normal and handicapped young children. Individual titles are:

The Handicapped Child in the Normal Preschool Class	#114	$1.75
Emotional and Behavioral Development and Disabilities	#115	$1.75
Learning Development and Disabilities	#116	$1.25
Language Development and Disabilities	#117	$1.25
Intellectual Development and Disabilities	#118	$1.25

(Set of 5 booklets: $7.00)

The UYC Series was made available through the Alaska Treatment Center for Crippled Children and Adults, Anchorage, Alaska. We would like to thank the center's staff members for permitting us to reprint this series.

Contents

Emotional Development and Behavior..... 1

Emotional and Behavioral Disabilities..... 27

EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND BEHAVIOR

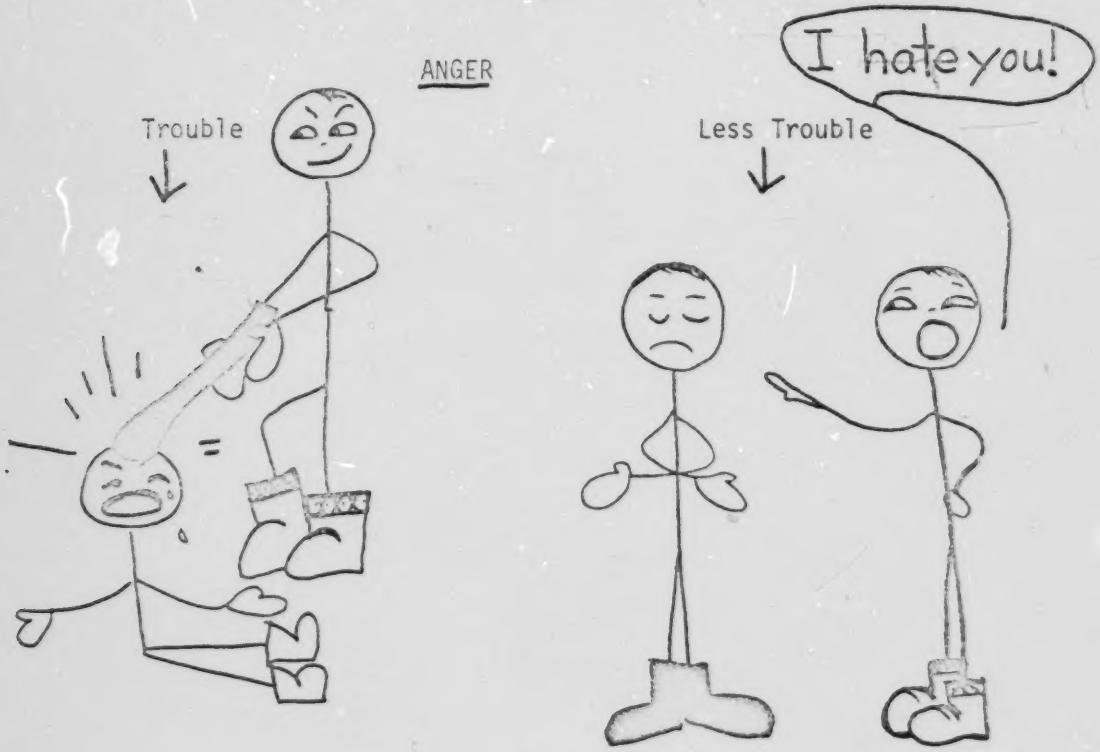
EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND BEHAVIOR

Emotional development occurs as a result of growing and learning, and like intellectual development it progresses in stages. One step has to be completed before the child can successfully move on to the next one. While some of these stages may be considered unpleasant by adults, it is important to understand that they are all necessary if the child is to grow to his fullest potential.

It would be silly to ask an eight month old child to run down to the store for you, he can't walk yet, much less run.

And it is equally silly to demand that a two year old child stop crying when his toy is snatched away from him. Emotional development takes time, and a child can not be expected to control himself like an adult.

A small infant expresses only basic emotions. He can cry when he is uncomfortable, and giggle when he is pleased. He doesn't feel the more complex emotions, like jealousy or worry. The pre-school child, on the other hand, has many strong feelings. Emotions like anger, love, hate, fear, worry, jealousy, and sadness are normal. The problem for the child is to find ways to express these feelings without "getting into trouble."



What is acceptable and what is not acceptable in behavior varies from culture to culture, family to family, and even person to person. We all have our own ideas as to what is acceptable behavior and what is not. These differences can be very confusing to a child.

I was wrong.
You shouldn't have pushed Tommy. That was bad.
I was proud of you for standing up to Tommy when he hit you!
I was right.

A child's feelings have a lot to do with his behavior, but most children go through some regular patterns. The "terrible two's" is an expression sometimes used to describe children of two and three. Often they appear to be inflexible and demanding, saying "no" to everything.

At three they may be reliable, co-operative, and easy to live with.

PS 007404

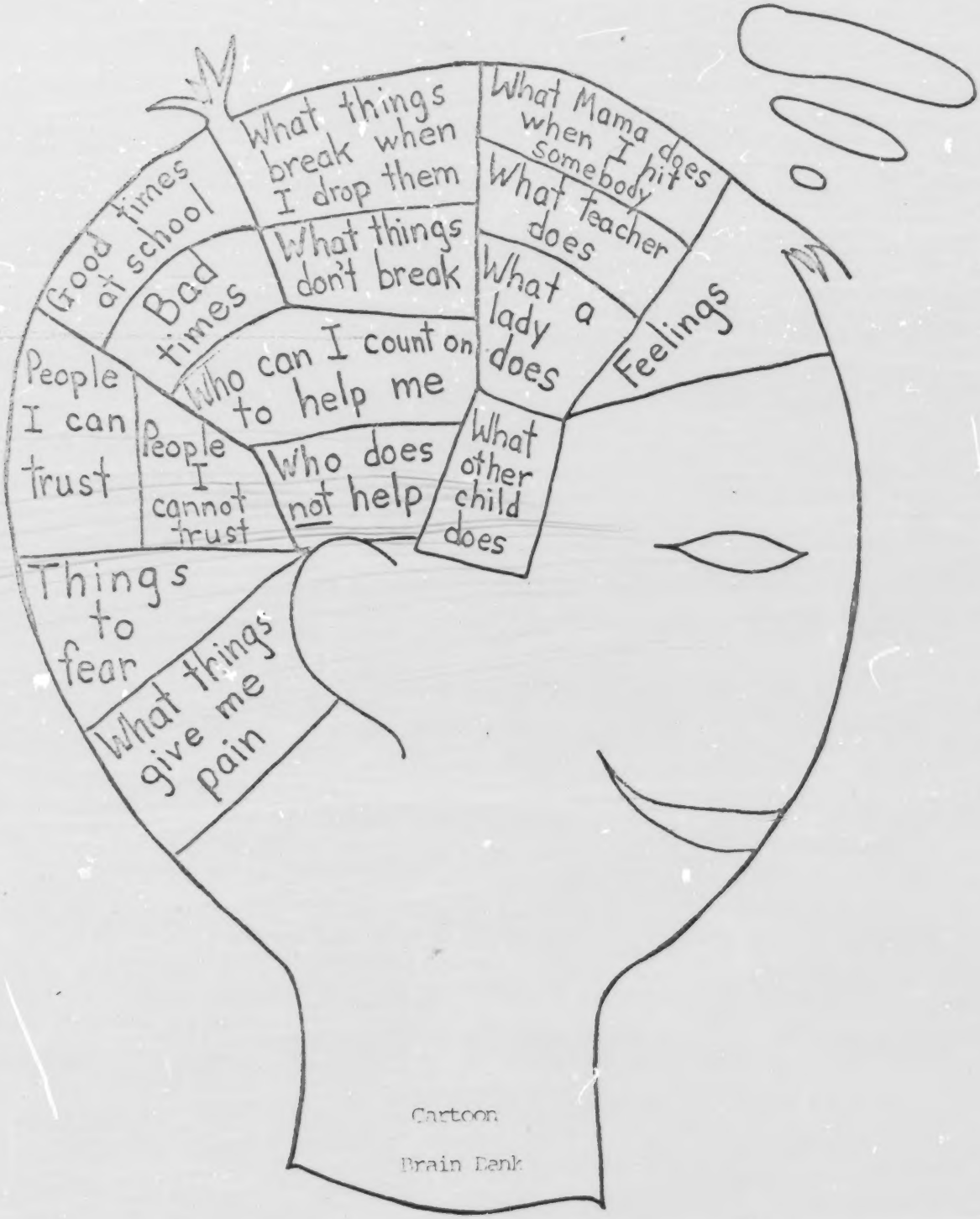
At three and a half they may get dependent and clingy, and

at four they are often agressive and hard to handle.

The five year old is usually well adjusted and stable.

The same patterns appear to recur throughout the child's maturing years. When a child appears agressive, defiant, and a little difficult to live with, he is actually learning about himself and the world around him. He cannot learn unless he acts, meets life head on, and pushes things around a bit.

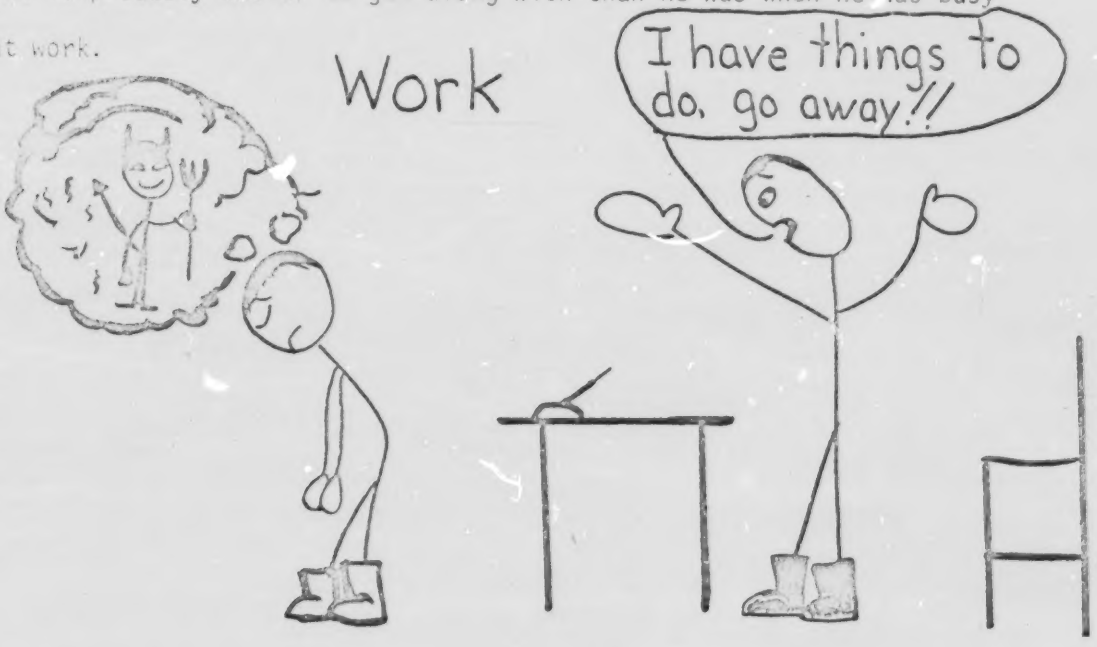
When the child seems more cooperative, and fairly easy to get along with, he is taking a rest and filing things in his head. He is sorting out the various experiences he has had.

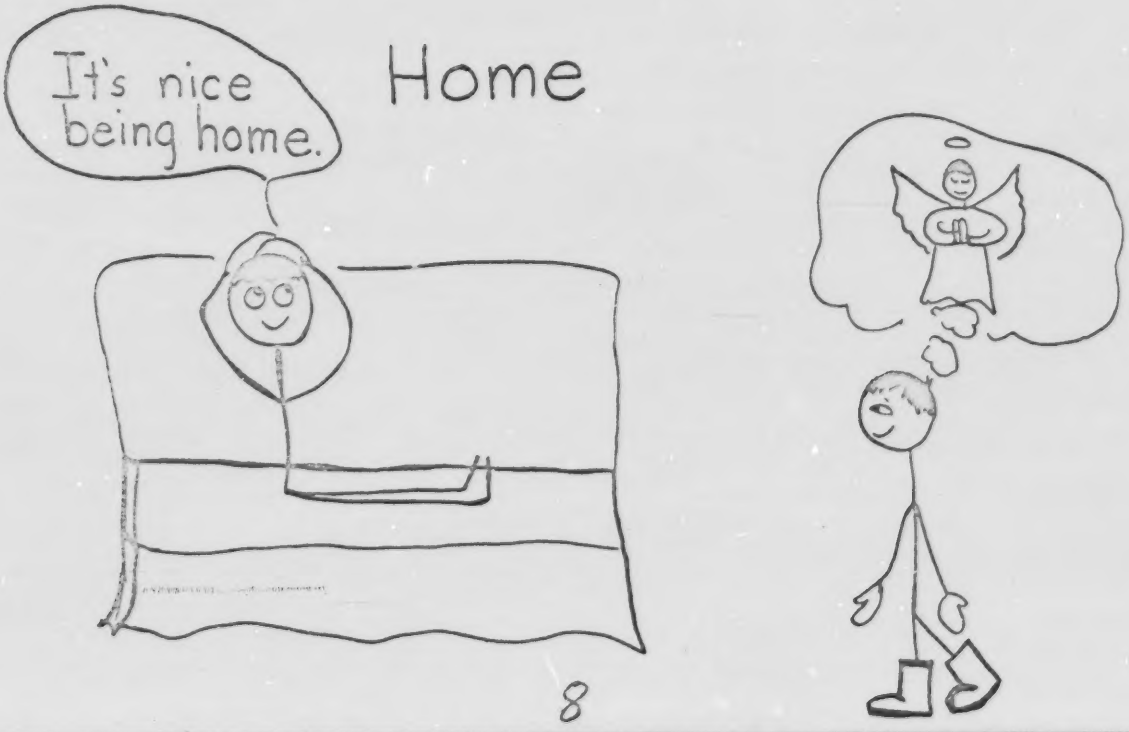

What things break when I drop them
What Mama does when I hit somebody
What teacher does
What a lady does
Feelings
What other child does
Who does not help
Who can I count on to help me
What things don't break
Good times at school
Bad times
People I can trust
People I cannot trust
Things to fear
What things give me pain

Cartoon

Brain Bank

An adult example of the same thing might be a man who is agressive at work. He may be a little difficult to get along with, because he has things to do and at work does not want to be interupted. When he comes home, however, he relaxes and goes through the day's work in his head, and is probably easier to get along with than he was when he was busy at work.





Learning is a child's work, and to learn one must explore, test, try out, and even defy. Though adults find some stages easier to handle than others, all of the stages are necessary. A three and a half year old may be calm and easy to handle, but he is definitely too insecure to cope with life.

He needs to break out and become the seemingly too confident four year old.

If he doesn't, he may be less of a problem to adults, but he will not grow as he should.

Adults can be very selfish in demanding that a child behave in a way that is comfortable for the adult, without taking into consideration the child's need to develop at his own rate, in his own way.

If he is not allowed the necessary freedom, he will not develop the skills he will need to face the world on his own. Understanding of basic child development, then, is important for any one who involves himself with children. Even an adult feels more comfortable if he knows what to expect.

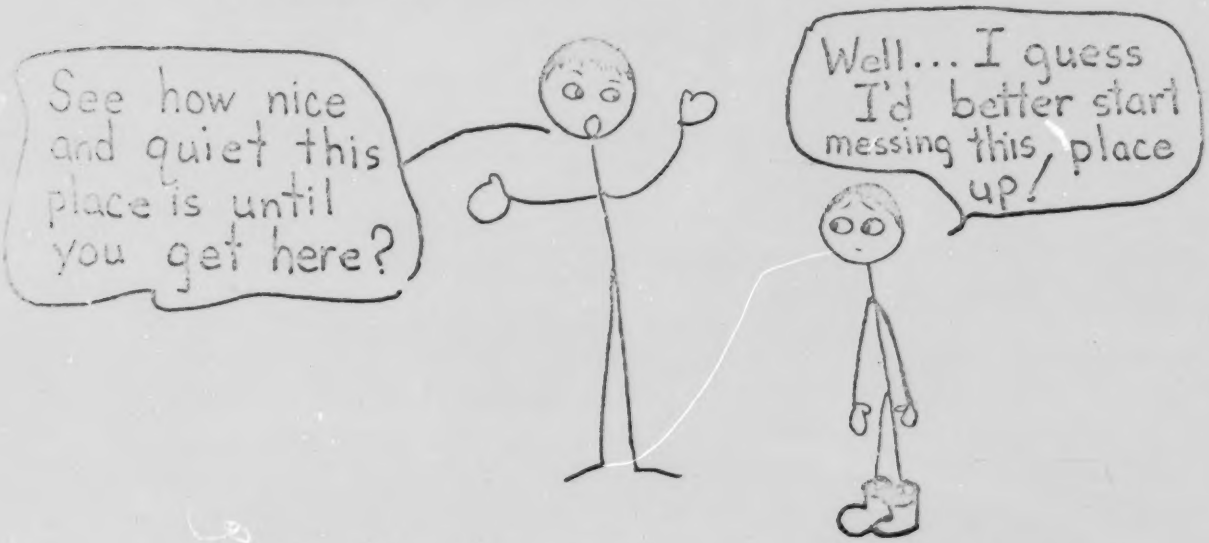
Feelings of Security and Adequacy

"Look, teacher, I'm bigger than you think; let me do this by myself," said Sue to a teacher who insisted on helping her. It is unfortunate that often adults handicap children by treating them as though they were incapable of handling anything. It is hard to develop confidence in yourself when you are surrounded by people who are "helping" all the time.

Most adults wish they had more self confidence. It's a lot easier to do something when you feel confident than when you are afraid of failing. Feelings of inadequacy and insecurity are handicapping. The pre-school setting can do much to build confidence in young children, and this feeling will be reflected in their intellectual, social, and other kinds of development. When you are confident, you are not afraid to grow; you try harder, and consequently you learn more.

Children tend to behave as they feel they are expected to behave. They build concepts of themselves by responses of the people around them.

Tom, for example, thinks of himself as a trouble-maker. Picture him and his father coming into the pre-school one morning.



No wonder Tom is noisy, defiant, and hard to handle. He lives up to the picture his father paints.

When Tim's mother brought him to school, she explained to the teacher in front of Tim, "I hope he can learn something here. He doesn't like to learn things. He just tries for a minute and then gives up."

It is not surprising that Tim lacks confidence, doesn't try hard, and is not friendly. That's what he knows his mother expects of him, so that's how he behaves.

Jean was a timid girl, but she liked to paint. She was at the easel painting carefully around the edges of her paper when her mother walked in.

How can one have much confidence if she is considered a "nobody?" Jean did not expect to be important, so she rarely tried.

The many times that the word "big" appears in children's conversations, I'm a big boy," "I have the most, " or "Mine is the biggest," may be a reflection of how often adults tend to make the child feel that he is too little, and not worth much. It is often hard to recognize values other than actual achievement. Adults sometimes want children who paint good pictures and do the "right" thing. They push their children and fail to value them for what they are.

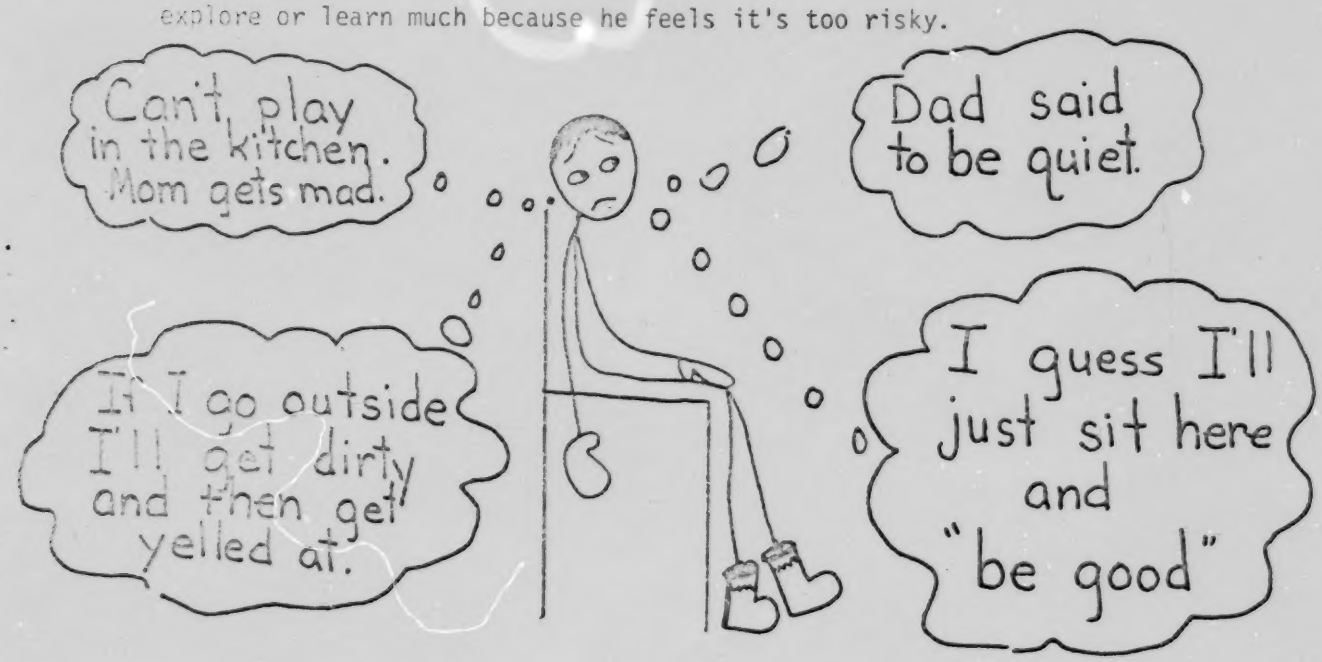
Fear

Often adults frighten children with certain words, without being aware of what they are doing. An adult may casually say in the presence of a child, "I'm scared to death of snow machines." The adult does not mean the statement literally, but to the child the meaning is clear, death may result from a snow machine. Such an idle remark could arouse intense fear which could last until the child has had many experiences with snow machines that did not cause death.

A certain amount of fear is necessary to protect us from harm. If we weren't afraid of injury or death, what would stop us from walking off the edge of a cliff?

Unnecessary fears, however, are crippling and can do much to interrupt the normal process of development.

If a child is afraid of doing wrong, or being "bad," he may never explore or learn much because he feels it's too risky.

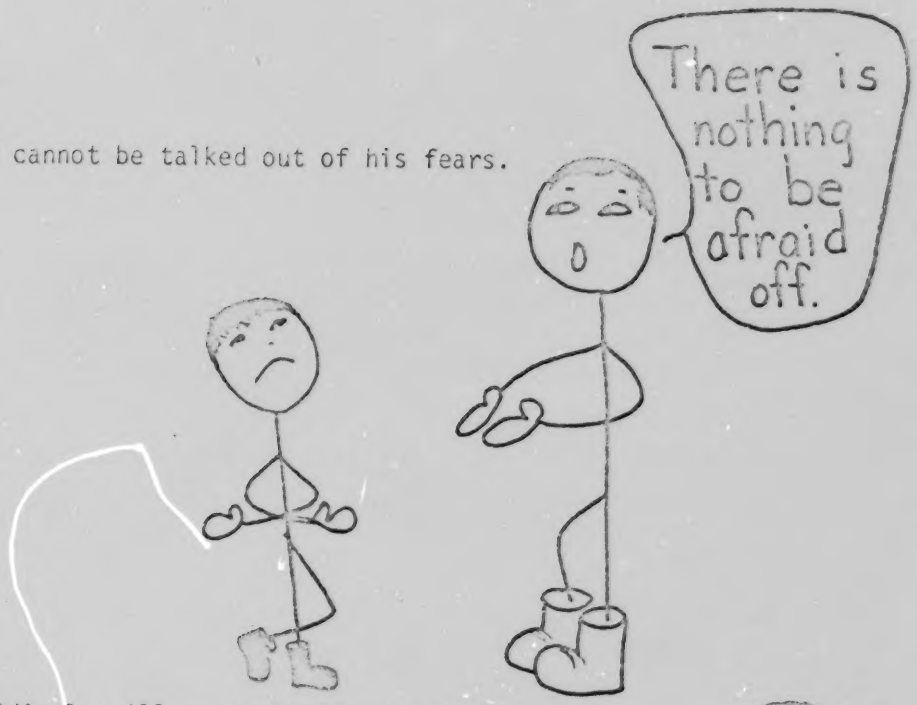

Can't play in the kitchen. Mom gets mad.
Dad said to be quiet.
If I go outside I'll get dirty and then get yelled at.
I guess I'll just sit here and "be good"

It is important to know that fear is learned. Children even tend to reflect the fears of adults. If every time Mama sees a spider she does this:

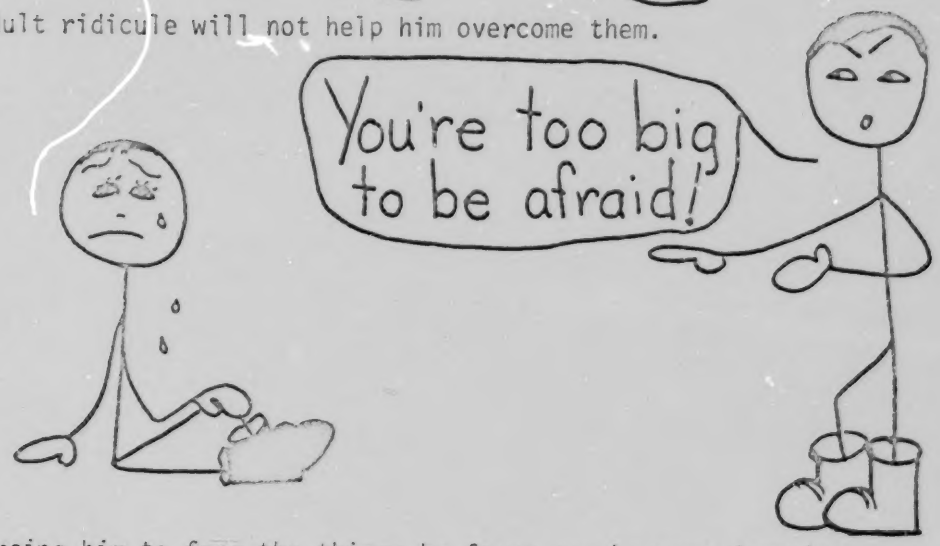
it won't take long before her child does the same:

If Mama is afraid, the child thinks that he should be afraid too.

A child cannot be talked out of his fears.

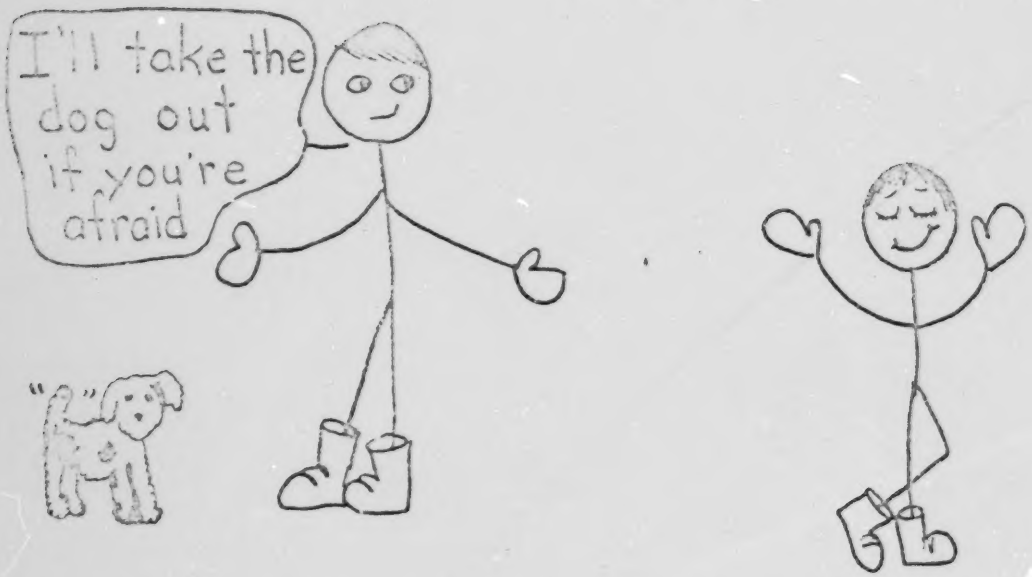


Adult ridicule will not help him overcome them.



Forcing him to face the things he fears can be very damaging.

Removing fear-arousing experiences will help.



Calmness displayed by adults does much to alleviate the fears of children.

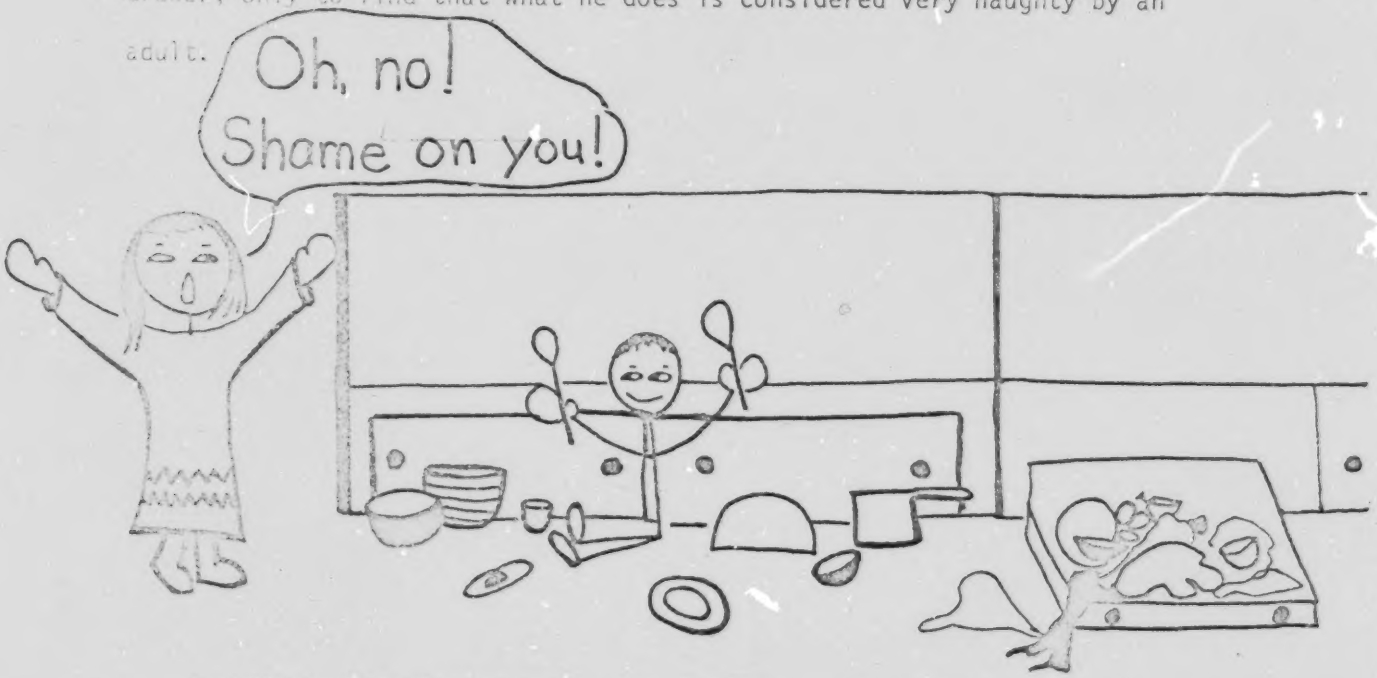
Pushing Children

Often adults tend to push children too quickly from one stage of development to the next, wanting them to grow up as fast as possible. We tend to nudge children on, rather than allowing them to take time to satisfy their needs in each stage.

The soundest growth occurs when the child is given time to complete each stage fully before he moves on to the next one. Dependency, for example, comes before independence, and the child who is eventually the most independent is the one whose dependency needs have been most completely met, not the one who was pushed the soonest into being independent. Nudging children from one stage to the next only makes them feel less secure and more defensive. Children who have been "pushed through" a stage frequently have to go back and experience it again before they are free enough and secure enough to develop further.

Children and Guilt

Another threat to the development of confidence is the tendency of adults to make children feel guilty by blaming them for things that happen. A child may enjoy the experience of playing in the mud or emptying a drawer, only to find that what he does is considered very naughty by an adult.



A child has little understanding of adult values. Since he feels the need to please adults because of his dependency on them, he can easily feel uncertain about himself and his behavior. When he is blamed for things he doesn't fully understand, he loses confidence and trust in himself.

How many times have you heard an adult say to a child, "If you are good, I'll let you . . . .?" By making something conditional on a child's good or bad behavior, we can make him feel responsible for events that have no connection with him.

Sue was told by her mother that if she were a very good girl she could go to the store the next day. Certainly, Sue might think, if she could bring about a trip to the store by being good, she could cause a calamity by being bad. If her mother got sick the next day, or if the store burned down, Sue might very well blame herself because she had been bad.

Without enough experience to correct his concepts, the child is a victim of his misapprehensions. We may not suspect a child's real feelings or understand the heavy load of guilt he may be hiding.

Adults and Security

Accepting children and meeting their needs is easier for people who are themselves secure. A secure person is relaxed, comfortable, and giving. He or she doesn't feel the need to make demands on others. Insecure people are defensive and often demanding. They are likely to set standards that are very difficult, if not impossible, for the child to meet. They are likely to be very much concerned about what other

people think of them as parents or teachers.

Tom's father wants to be a successful parent, but his concept of a successful parent is one whose child behaves like an adult. It is impossible for Tom to meet such a demand, and Father feels that he has failed as a parent because Tom acts like a child instead of an adult. He is not a secure parent. Thus he makes Tom an insecure child.

Responsibility for Limits

Giving a child room to grow, meeting his needs, and accepting him for what he is, this does not mean letting the child do anything he wants and leaving him entirely responsible for his behavior. Few adults are mature enough to take such responsibility. We find that laws are necessary, and police are needed to enforce them. The adult who lets the child do exactly what he wants to do is avoiding his own responsibilities. Children need to have limits set for protection of themselves and others. They even feel more secure if they know that someone is there to protect them from the things that they do not yet understand, or cannot cope with.

A child's behavior is often a reflection of how he is feeling. An adult can do much to help. Anger, fear, jealousy, and other emotions can be expressed in ways that are acceptable to the surrounding adult population. Learning these ways, however, takes a great deal of effort, both by the child and the adult who is guiding him.

A child's health is closely related to his emotional reactions and behavior. Extreme fatigue can often cause uncomfortable feelings. A tired child becomes irritable and annoyed and may express his feelings by such undesirable behavior as temper tantrums and agressive, destructive acts. A child does not know how to calm himself, when he is tired or overexcited. He needs adult direction to make life more comfortable for him. If the child has difficulty seeing, or hearing, or remembering, he can easily become frustrated and annoyed with himself and may behave in undesirable ways. When a child is "naughty," he usually has a very good reason for being so.

SUMMARY

Good emotional development is not an easy process, but it affects all other areas of development. If you are not happy and comfortable with yourself, you may not care to grow, learn, walk, talk or do much of anything. Most adults grew up without enough understanding of their feelings. Let's hope that today's children have a little better chance. Emotional maturity comes through wholesome attitudes of parents and adults in permitting children to act and to think for themselves under supervision that is neither too rigid nor too permissive.

EMOTIONAL AND BEHAVIORAL DISABILITIES

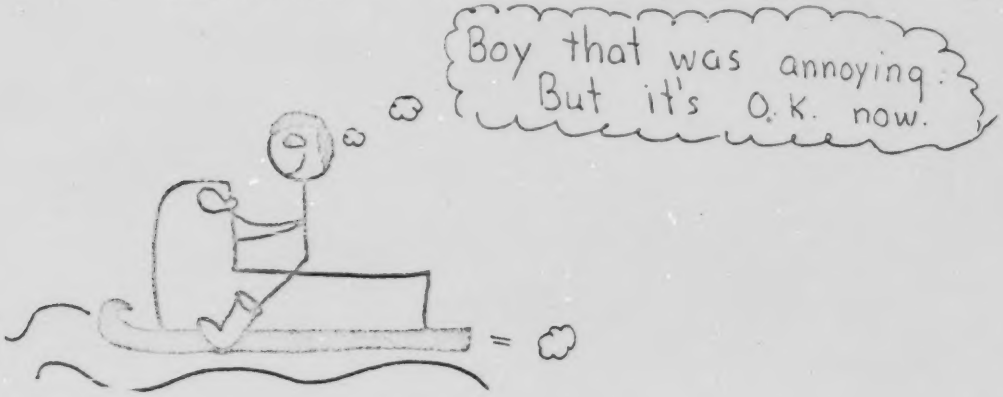
EMOTIONAL AND BEHAVIORAL DISABILITIES

Introduction

All of us get involved in situations that produce uncomfortable feelings. This is a normal part of living.

Learning how to handle these feelings properly, however, can often be difficult. During the times when we are having trouble with such feelings we can all be considered emotionally disabled. Being emotionally uncomfortable can paralyze our abilities.

Luckily, for most of us this is only a temporary situation.



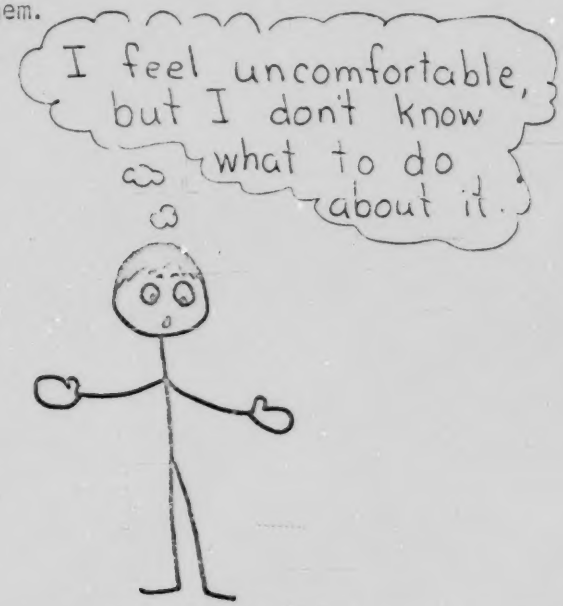
Unfortunately, for others it is anything but temporary.

Good emotional development is essential for proper growth, but it is not always easy to come by. This section is planned to give some assistance to parents and teachers in their dealings with children who have emotional difficulties, either temporarily (as most children do) or on a more serious level. Four areas will be discussed. Part I deals with helping children in their everyday difficulties. Part II deals with helping the child who appears to have serious emotional problems. Part III deals with the emotional necessity of limit-setting (discipline). Part IV deals with directing behavior.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Helping Children in Their Everyday Difficulties

Pre-school children are just beginning to learn about their feelings and how to handle them.



If they are given proper assistance when they are young, they have a better chance for sound emotional development. If proper assistance is not given, the chance of developing serious emotional difficulties is greater.

Children have very strong feelings. The first step in helping them handle their feelings is to accept those feelings. As was stated earlier, all feelings are normal - hate, love, fear, jealousy, etc. It is much easier to deal with your emotions successfully if you don't think you are being blamed for your feelings.

We may not like the fact that Charlie hates Fred, but we can recognize that the feeling is there without judging it.

If parents or teachers cannot accept the feelings of children, they cannot do much to help a child handle his feelings.

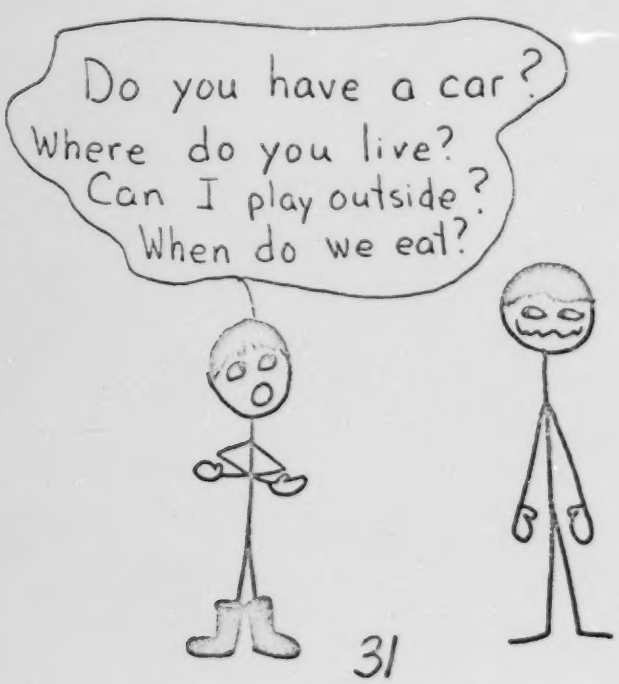
Unfortunately, our own feelings can get in the way of helping children. The way our feelings were handled when we were young can have a great deal to do with how we handle children. For example, if we were forced to share with a little brother, and had to act as though we always loved him, we may have built up some guilt and resentment for knowing that we didn't ALWAYS love Little Brother and that there were lots of times when we wished he'd leave our things alone.

Now, it may be hard to accept a child who does not share. If we were forced to share when we didn't want to, later we may punish a child for doing the same. This is a simplified example, but it shows that when we strongly reject a type of behavior, most likely there are deep emotional reasons within ourselves for doing so.

Another step in helping children deal with their emotions is to develop the ability to recognise the feelings of children. The best way to do this is to carefully observe their behavior. Children reveal their feelings through behavior. Often this is done directly; the child does what he feels. If he feels angry, he may scream and kick. At other times he may show his feelings more subtly and when angry may sit in a corner and bite his sleeve.

Voice quality and speech can be a good cue to how a child is feeling. A child who speaks very softly and says very little may be shy and a little afraid.

Another child may bombard you with many insistent and apparently needless questions. This may be a sign that he feels insecure and is looking for reassurance more than any specific answers.

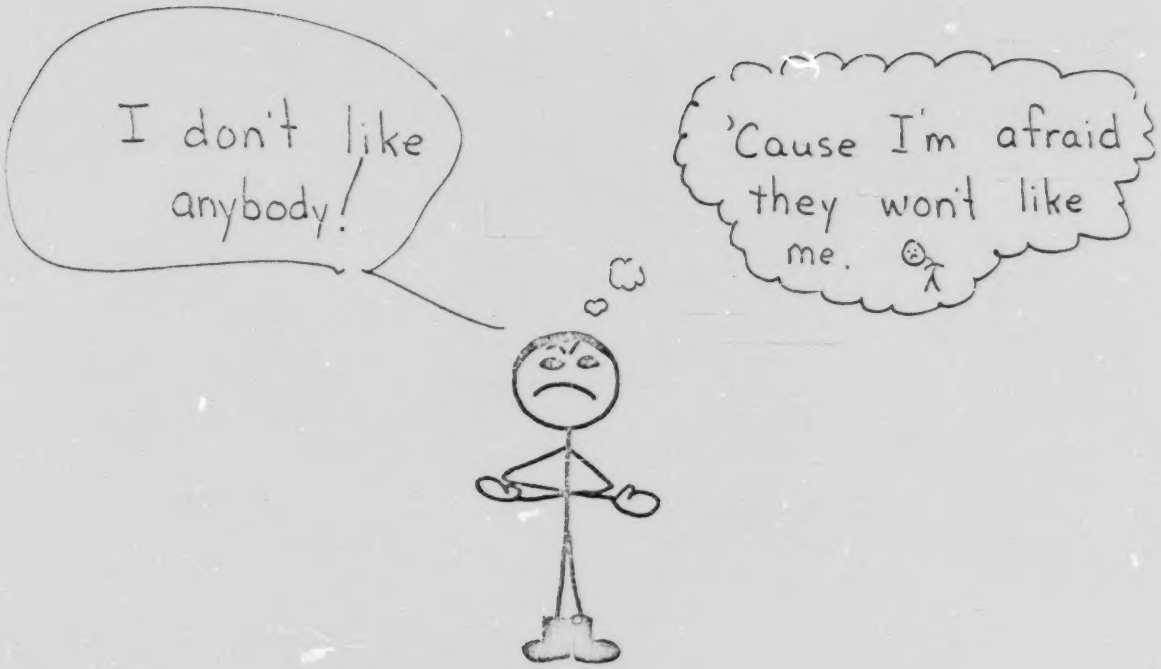


Spontaneous singing usually indicates feelings of confidence and contentment.

A very good way to recognize how children feel is to listen closely for the meaning behind the words that children speak. A nervous little boy, new at school, talked to the teacher while he was resting. He kept telling the teacher where he lived, and asked her if she had a snow go. She said yes and the boy chimed, "You could take me home!" What he said showed how he felt. He reassured himself by letting the teacher know where he lived and by working out a plan for getting home. The teacher understood and reassured him by telling him that his daddy would come and take him home just as he did yesterday, and that she would stay with him until Daddy came.

Another child may ask a teacher, "Do you want to go outside with me?" When he really means, "I'm afraid to go out by myself. It would help me feel better if you came with me." Teachers and parents need to understand the meaning behind what a child says.

Insecure feelings show themselves in many ways. Defensive behavior usually indicates insecurity. Children (like some adults) try to hide the uncertainty they feel by being aggressive. They might hit without much apparent reason or may reject the approaches of other children. They may be generally hostile and unfriendly. The secure child is not defensive and does not often feel threatened. The secure child can share easily. The insecure child cannot afford to share because he fears he will lose something. Telling a child that he has to share, or threatening him if he doesn't only increases his feeling of insecurity, and will make it twice as hard for him to share the next time around.



There are many signs that show that a child is experiencing uncomfortable feelings. Some of these are:

1. Biting fingernails
2. Chewing on clothing
3. Twirling hair
4. Thumb sucking
5. Wringing hands

How to Handle Feelings

After a feeling has been accepted and recognized, the next step is to do something about it. The best way to handle uncomfortable feelings is to put them into action that is not destructive. A child usually gets over an emotional state more quickly than an adult, because he expresses how he feels more readily. An adult will often "hold it in." We have all been told that we shouldn't hit and scream and be nasty when we are angry, but unfortunately we were rarely told what we could do instead. If all of us would do something when we felt something, we'd be a lot better off. Expressions of feeling should come when the feelings arise. Feelings can be put into words:

or physical activity:

or even art media:

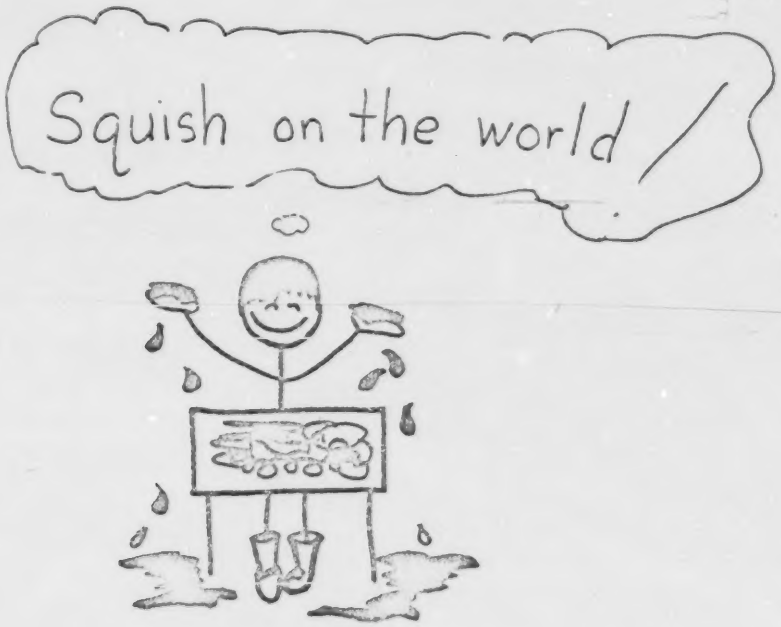
Expressing a feeling at the time it occurs helps us to identify exactly what the feeling is, and we feel secure when we know that we can handle our feelings in ways that are acceptable. We will now discuss some of these ways.

An adult who is troubled often goes to a friend and talks things out, and usually feels better for it. Children tend to say what they feel at the moment. They call names and shout descriptive insults at each other. This is a good way to handle feelings. It may not be the mature way, but children are not mature people. If we are mature, we know that such words do no damage, and are important in a child's development. Listening to a child swear may not be too high a price to pay for helping him get rid of uncomfortable feelings.

Another good expressive means to release uncomfortable feelings is crying. Yet it is not uncommon to hear people say to their children, "Stop crying, that didn't hurt, you're too big to cry." Whatever the reason, the feeling of wanting to cry is there, and needs to be accepted. It is more helpful to the child to tell him that you are sorry he feels bad than it is to tell him that he's too big to cry.

Children frequently use physical movements to drain off uncomfortable feelings. They may hit, kick, or throw. The child may need to be put by himself so he cannot hurt anyone, or, if he is mature enough, he may respond to a suggestion by a teacher like this: "I know you feel like hitting somebody, but you must not do it. Try hitting the clown with these bean bags. I'll count hits for you." A child can learn to handle his feelings if the adults around him understand his emotions and show him how to express them without getting into trouble.

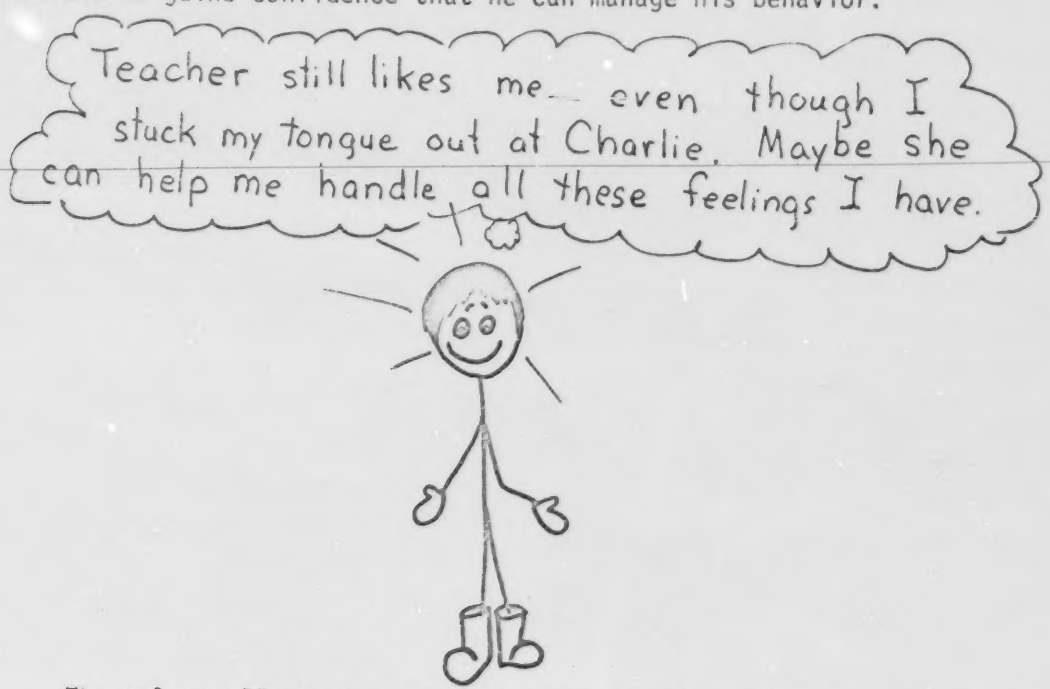
Art media like painting, water-play, mud, paper, and glue can be used to express feelings.



Anyone feels more secure if many avenues of outlet are open to him. When we do something about our emotions, we feel confident. An agressive child will often become a more secure adult than a passive child, because he has done something about his feelings and has learned how to manage them.

Denying that you feel something only makes the situation worse. If you admit that the feeling exists, you can deal with it; if you refuse to see what is there, you have no way to learn how to meet the problem.

The timid child needs special help. It is not uncommon to see a very timid child suddenly swing over into very agressive behavior as he begins to develop. This may be his first step in gaining confidence. He must first express his feelings and find acceptance, and then he can learn to direct his behavior in more acceptable forms. The timid child is hesitant to act out what he feels because he is afraid of not being accepted. With guidance, he can be brought out of his fear, but he will have to go through a rough stage of rather agressive behavior. First, he must try out being "bad." If he discoveres that his feelings are accepted, his "badness" does not frighten him and he gains confidence that he can manage his behavior.



The only really destructive feelings are those that have no recognized outlets.

Summary

Proper handling of feelings is one of the most difficult but most important activities of the pre-school teacher. A very important rule to remember is to be honest. Nothing ruins a child's trust more easily than knowing he has been deceived.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

The Child With Serious Emotional Difficulties

No one can escape having some emotional difficulties at some point in his life. The child who is labeled as emotionally disturbed, however, seems to have continuing emotional difficulties that appear harmful to his total development. The ideas discussed in Part I ("Helping Children in their Everyday Difficulties") can also be applied to children with more serious emotional problems. This section deals with some specific techniques in helping the more severely emotionally troubled child.

The question of why children have severe emotional difficulties is not easy to answer. Some children may have unsatisfied emotional needs. Perhaps they were denied love, security or acceptance. Other children lack such physical needs as proper food, shelter, and medical care. Still others, who seem to have everything they need, may be suffering from a form of brain injury or chemical imbalance that results in emotionally disturbed behavior. Sometimes you cannot tell why a particular child is having emotional difficulties. The knowledgeable teacher, however, <u>can</u> help a child deal more effectively with his emotional problems.

Specific Emotional and Behavioral Problems

<u>The overactive child</u> - One common problem is the child who displays much hyperactive behavior. He seems to act first and think later. To identify this problem, the teacher should notice children who are:

Fidgety

In constant motion

Limited in attention span

Easily distracted

Disruptive in group activities

Destructive

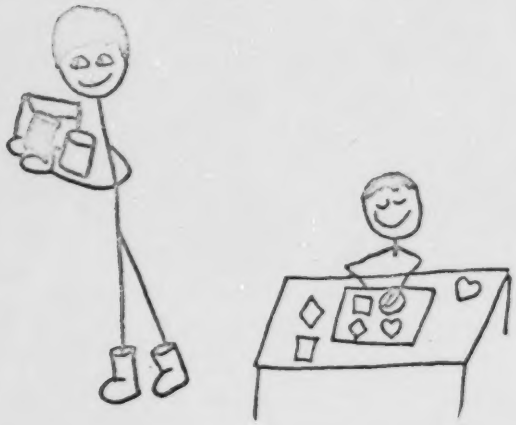
Apparently unaware of others' feelings

Unable to control themselves in an unstructured situation

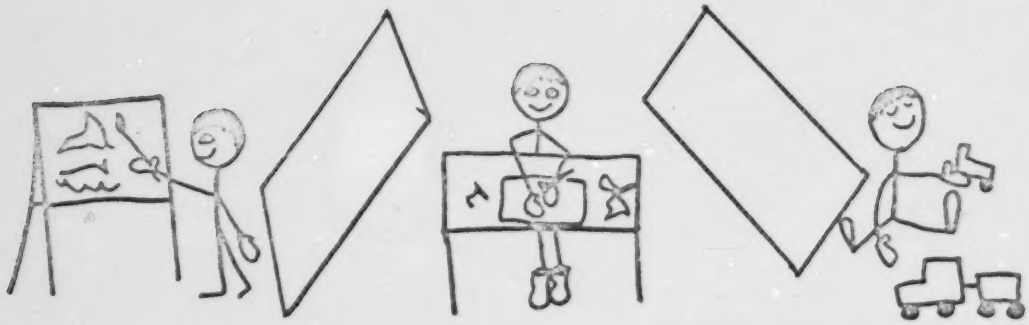
These children have a great deal of trouble in controlling their behavior. Generally additional guidance and program structure are beneficial in helping them.

Some Suggestions

If you want the child to work with a specific material, provide him with a quiet place to work, with a minimum of distractions. Remove all material except what you want him to concentrate on.



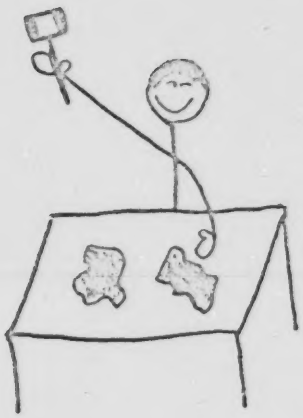
If he still has difficulty, you may want to block his view of all activities other than the activity assigned.



When you lead him into a new activity, stay with him until he is involved. Then check on his progress from time to time.

Try to keep hyperactive children out of frustrating situations that may encourage destructive behavior (activities that require a lot of sharing or waiting, or toys with lots of little peices).

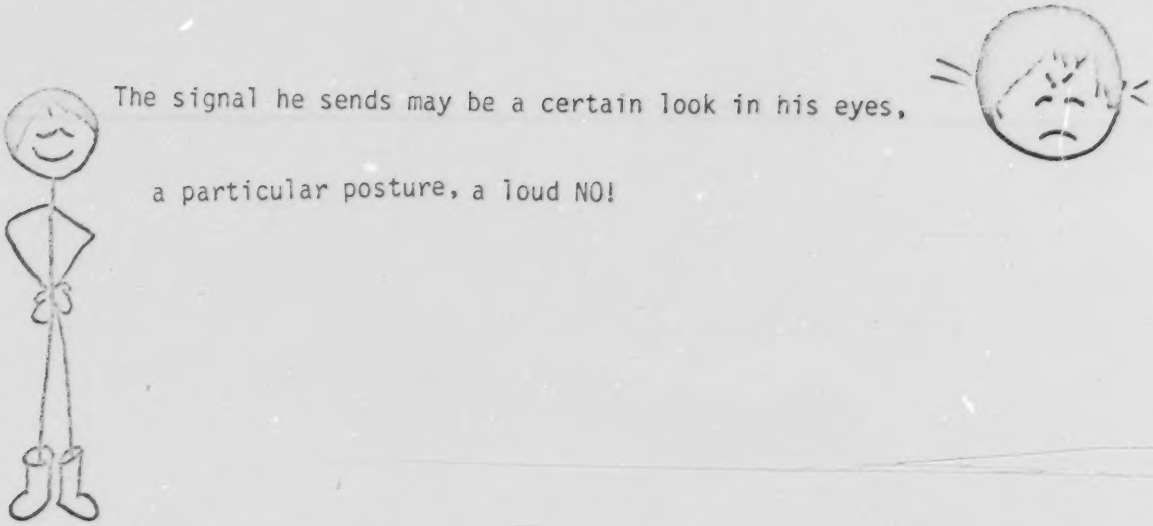
Allow specific times for expressing their active nature (running, pounding clay, etc.).



Remember it is hard for these children to wait. Do not tax them beyond their ability. For example, serve them near the beginning rather than the end of snacktime and other waiting activities.

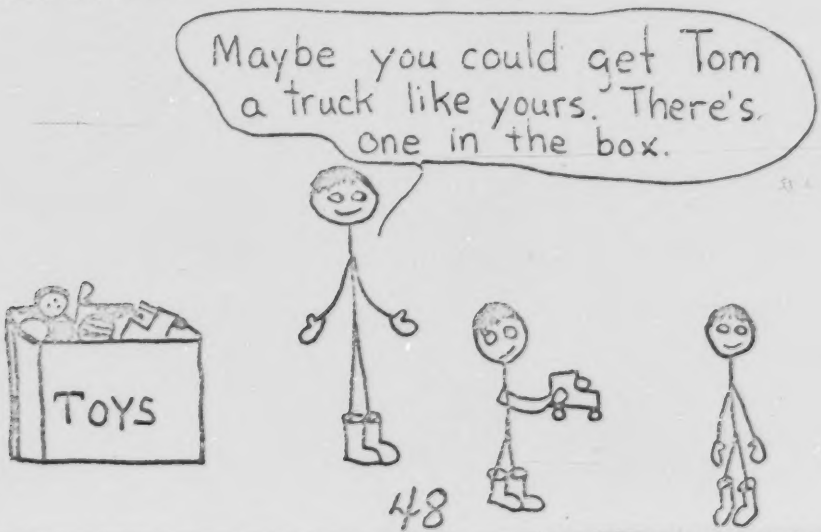
Children who have trouble controlling their behavior can gradually be taught control. Often they want to "behave" but do not have the ability to keep from "getting into trouble." One responsible adult should keep track of what the child is doing and help him control his impulses. This adult should be free to come to the child whenever he seems to be losing control. The child must know that he can rely on this person to help him at each difficult time.

The first step in helping a child control his actions is to notice what situations "send him off" and what signals he sends when he's about to have difficulty.



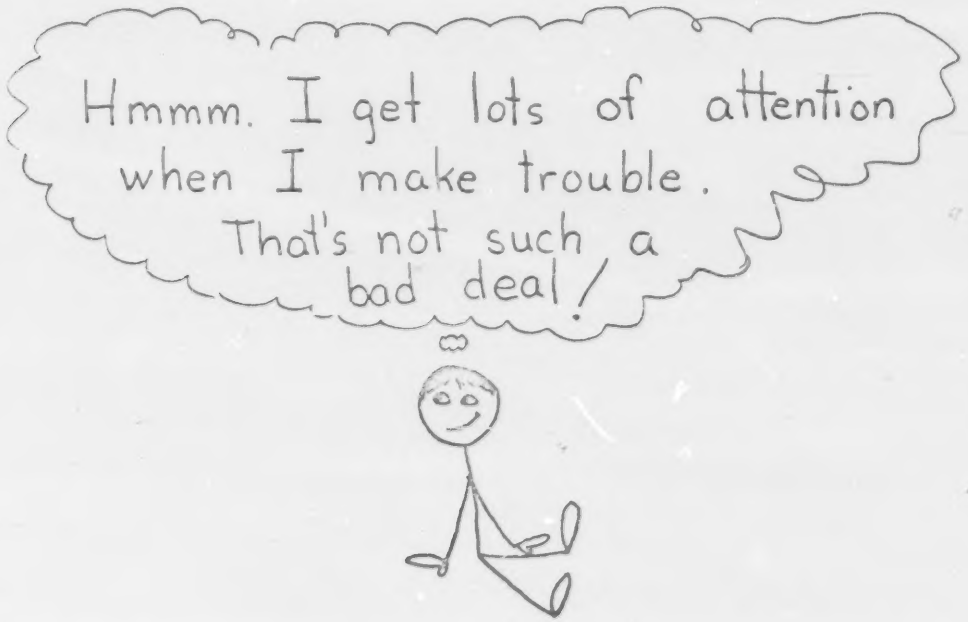
The signal he sends may be a certain look in his eyes, a particular posture, a loud NO!

When you see these cues, try to step in before trouble begins, and help him control himself.

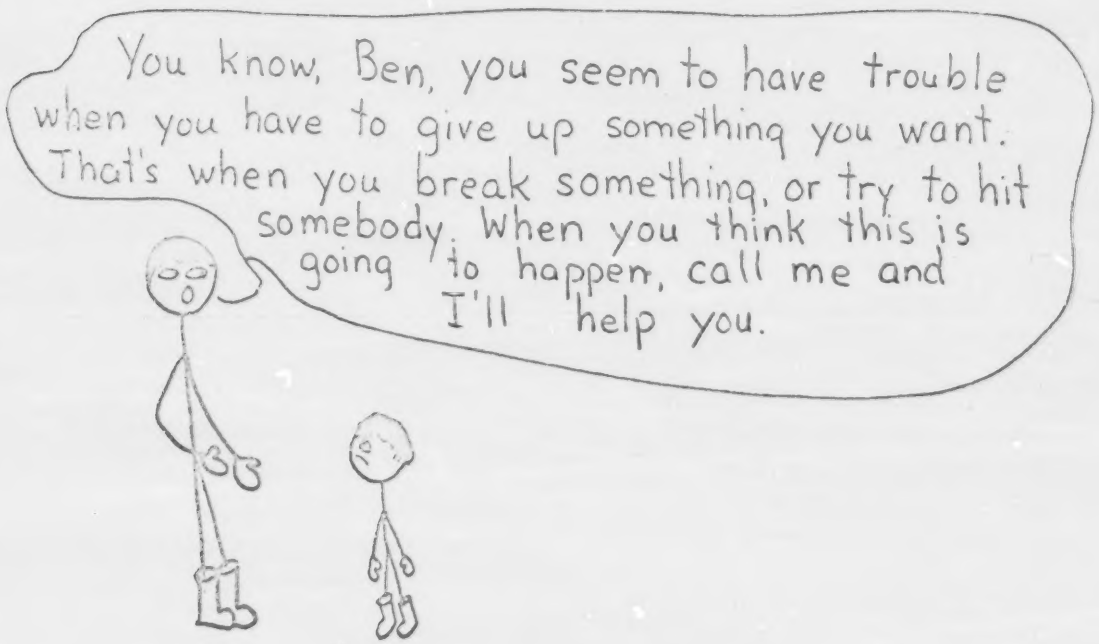


If you are too late and he has already lost control, remove him from the situation.

Be understanding, but don't make your attention so rewarding that it may motivate him to get into more trouble.

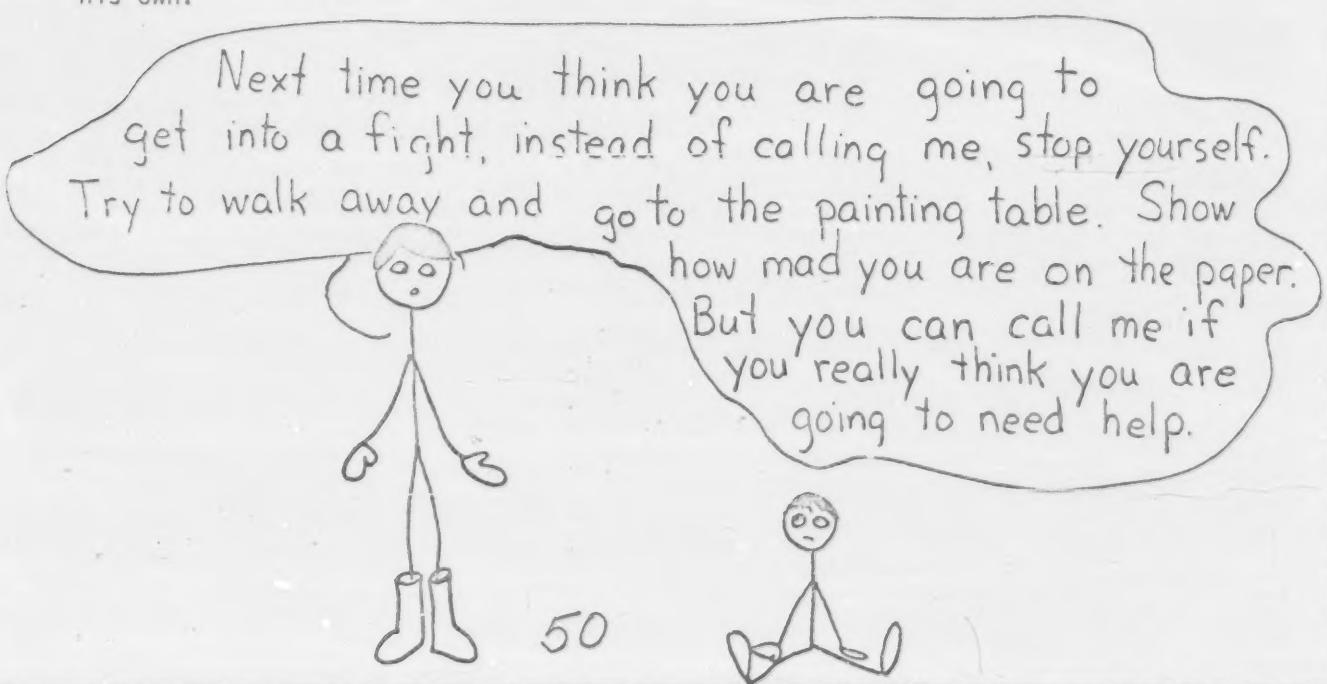


The next step is to teach the child his own signals. Example:


You know, Ben, you seem to have trouble when you have to give up something you want. That's when you break something, or try to hit somebody. When you think this is going to happen, call me and I'll help you.

Try to be near enough so you can get to the child quickly whenever he needs help, and check with him once in a while so he knows you really care.

The final step is to give his own controls back to the child. This should be done slowly, so he doesn't feel you're leaving him completely on his own.


Next time you think you are going to get into a fight, instead of calling me, stop yourself. Try to walk away and go to the painting table. Show how mad you are on the paper. But you can call me if you really think you are going to need help.

Praise him for doing well, and gradually encourage him to take more responsibility for his own actions. Give him as much attention as you did before so he doesn't feel that he is losing your friendship. It won't work unless he is sure that it is of benefit to him to learn to control his own behavior. This process is a slow one. It takes time, energy, and a lot of caring. Who can say that any one child is not worth at least that much?

The Fearful Child - A child who seems to be very worried or afraid can miss out on a lot of growing and learning experiences. The world is a very scarey place for him. A good teacher can show him the better side of life and help decrease his anxieties.

Some signs of fear and worry in children are:

Crying very easily

Watching other children play but not joining them

Relying on order and routine, becoming upset when things are changed

Fearing new people and situations

Here are some suggestions for working with such children:

1. When the children enter new situations, try to be with them as much as possible. They need to feel secure and trusting before they can feel comfortable enough to explore new situations on their own.

2. Reassure them when they become afraid.

3. Extra physical contact may help.

4. Encourage them to enter into activities and praise them for their accomplishments.

5. Talk to them about their worries and fears, but only when they are ready to talk about them. You can talk about worries without confronting them directly, that may be too frightening.

Give the child a chance to deny what you think he is afraid of. You could be wrong!

Distant Children - Some children have a hard time relating to people. Some signs of this difficulty are:

Little or no reaction to other children or adults, possibly even their parents.

Poor eye contact, rarely looking you in the eye

More interest in objects than in people

Repeating a pharse over and over again with little meaning

Barely communicating with the words they use

Often, not speaking at all

Rocking back and forth or running from one end of the room to another with little apparent purpose

Staring at things for long periods of time

Using toys in strange ways (turning a block over and over in the hands instead of using it to build)

Here are some suggestions in working with distant children:

1. Remember that these children live in a private world of their own and often choose to be by themselves. Avoid barging into their world. If communication comes, it will be a very slow process.

2. Observe and discover what interests the child and seems to give him pleasure. Try to be present during such an activity. It may be a specific toy, or meal time. He may connect you with the pleasurable experience, and seeing you will remind him of a good time he has had. This builds trust, and a foundation for communication.

3. If the child seems to enjoy physical contact (hugging, holding hands, etc.) use this frequently as a means of communication.

4. Provide a program that involves a fair amount of structure. Even if they don't participate in group activities, generally these children like routine, and like to know that to expect next.

Summary

The distant child is probably the most difficult to work with. There are many theories as to what is the best approach to take with them. Being a friend is a good start.

Children with severe behavioral and emotional difficulties should be seen by a professional specifically trained in this area who can provide more exact ideas in working with a specific child.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

EMOTIONAL AND BEHAVIORAL DISABILITIES

Part III

Limit Setting

Importance of Limits

To feel free one must feel safe. Proper limits provide this safety.

The adult who cannot stop a child when it is necessary, is not offering that child freedom, but is exposing him to danger.

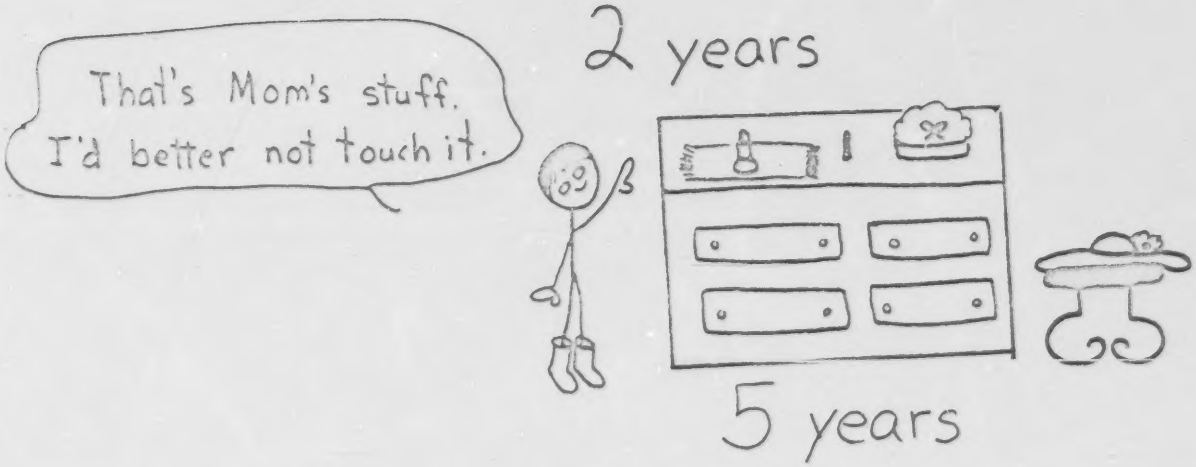
Children depend upon adults to maintain safe limits, because a child is often too inexperienced to judge the consequences of his actions. Many of the things that have to do with safety, health, and rights of others are beyond a child's ability to comprehend.

The adult who takes the responsibility for providing limits leaves the child more free to explore and have successful experiences. The child can then act with confidence because he is protected against mistakes.

It is not easy to know when to set limits and what the limits should be. The following are guidelines that may help:

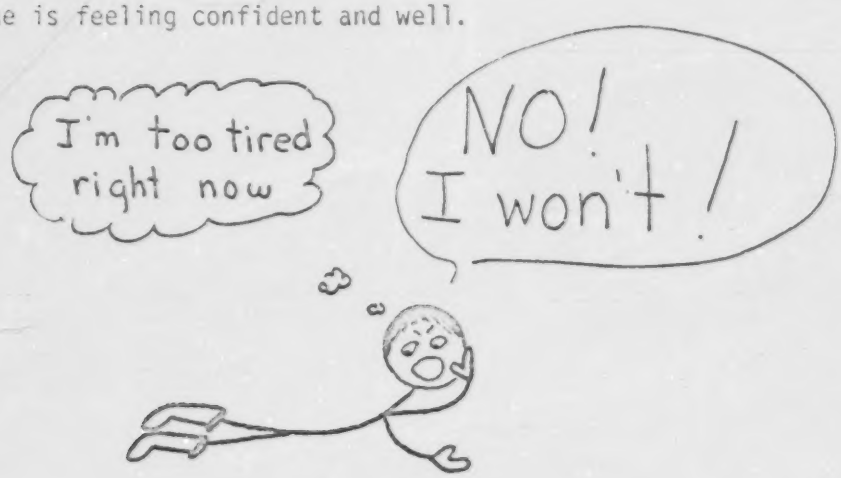
1. Limits should match the stage of development and the individual needs of the child. A two year old, for example, may have trouble stopping himself from the urge to touch things, no matter how insistent you are. A five year old, however, has matured enough that he can accept many more limitations comfortably.

2 years



5 years

If a child is tired or ill or unsure of himself, he is less able to accept limits than when he is feeling confident and well.



2. The limits must be necessary. Often it is hard to tell whether we are setting a limit for the child's good, or for our own comfort.

3. The child must be able to understand the limit. Explain to him in simple language what it is you want. He must know what the limit means in terms of what he is supposed to do.

Confusing

Understandable

Stop banging those pans together! It's giving me a terrible headache. Try playing with your puzzles for a while.
I can handle that!

4. Testing a limit is necessary for the child. A healthy child will not always conform passively to demands. If he is to acquire independence and inner strength, he must assert himself.

The adult must feel comfortable with the resistance. We should accept the child's right to resist without feeling threatened by it. We must still demand that he accept the limit, but let him know that we respect how he feels about it.

5. Avoid the use of shame, fear, or ridicule. This type of discipline only makes the child think that we don't care about how he feels. Why should he listen to someone who doesn't care about him?

You look funny acting so babish!
Ridicule
You must be a nasty boy not to obey your mother.
Shame
You do what I say or you're going to get it!
Fear
Nobody cares, sniff, how I feel...

6. Give the child time to accept the limit.

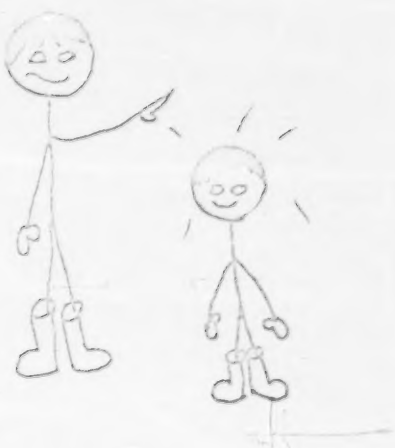
Summary

Good discipline is not an easy matter. But it is very important for the child's total development. In one child, defiance may mean an independent step forward, while in another it may indicate conflict. The goal is to develop self control in all children through understanding. The ability to control one's behavior demands that one be mature. Individual maturity is developed when responsibility for behavior is gradually transferred from the guiding adult to the child as his abilities for handling responsibility increases.

EMOTIONAL AND BEHAVIORAL DISABILITIES

Part IV

Directing Behavior



Directing Behavior

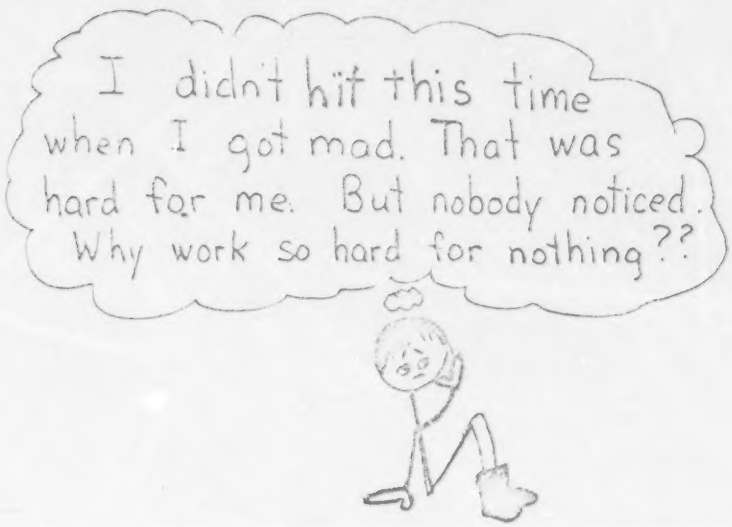
Severe behavior problems can interfere with a child's ability to grow and learn. For example, a child who appears to ignore you, or actively avoid paying attention, can not learn or benefit from any activity. Paying attention (attending behavior) is essential for learning.

When severe problems exist, it may become necessary to try to change the child's behavior. One excellent way to accomplish this is to reward acceptable behavior and to withhold rewards for unacceptable behavior. We actually do this all the time without thinking about it. We smile (reward) when a child has done a good job.

We often keep from smiling (withholding reward) if we are disappointed in his performance.

This technique can be used more directly in helping children with severe behavioral problems. Children like attention, praise, and privileges, and will work for them. The first step is to find out what conditions are rewarding for a particular child. Some children liked to be hugged while others don't. Some children liked to be chosen for special activities, and others do not like to be "spotted out." Look for a particular child's rewards, and use them to help him control his behavior.

The next step is to give rewards consistently in the beginning. If Charlie is sometimes, but not always, praised for not hitting other children when he is angry, he will be less likely to behave appropriately (by not hitting) than if he is praised every time.



After a pattern has been established, you can go on to praising him less often for appropriate behavior. The improvement in his life becomes his reward.

Some unappropriate behavior is best ignored. If a child receives little or no attention when he is sucking his thumb and receives much attention when he is not, he will probably decide that <u>not</u> sucking his thumb is more rewarding.

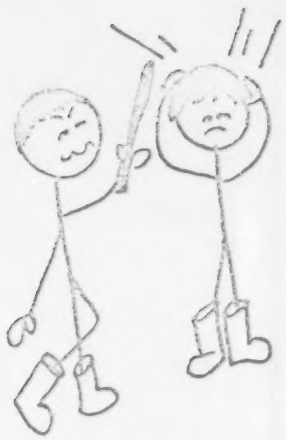
Ignore inappropriate behavior

(thumb sucking)

Reward appropriate behavior

(not sucking thumb)

Some behavior cannot be ignored. If a child is hurting himself or someone else, or is destroying important materials, his actions must be stopped.



In such situations one must be careful to stop the behavior without providing a reward. If Charlie gets attention only when he is getting into trouble, getting into trouble becomes a rewarding situation for him, and he has no reason to change it. It might be wise, to reward Charlie when he does nothing, nothing being better than pounding Fred over the head with a stick.

Summary

It is obvious that directing behavior requires time and thought. A head teacher in a classroom may be too busy with the other children to be able to provide enough individual attention. A teacher aid or a volunteer may be in a better position to do this. The techniques discussed work well because they are positive in approach, but they must be used carefully. Before you decide that any behavior should be changed, you should have a good understanding of why the behavior exists. It is easy to confuse the meaning of a child's behavior if it is viewed in the light of what we think is right or wrong.

Postscript

The Educational Resources Information Center/Early Childhood Education Clearinghouse (ERIC/ECE) is one of a system of 16 clearinghouses sponsored by the National Institute of Education to provide information about current research and developments in the field of education. The clearinghouses, each focusing on a specific area of education (such as early childhood, teacher education, language and linguistics), are located at universities and institutions throughout the United States.

The clearinghouses search systematically to acquire current, significant documents relevant to education. These research studies, speeches, conference proceedings, curriculum guides, and other publications are abstracted, indexed and published in Research in Education (RIE), a monthly journal. RIE is available at libraries, or may be ordered from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402.

Another ERIC publication is Current Index to Journals in Education (CIJE), a monthly guide to periodical literature which cites articles in more than 560 journals and magazines in the field of education. Articles are indexed by subject, author, and journal contents. CIJE is available at libraries, or by subscription from Macmillan Information, 909 Third Avenue, New York, New York 10022.

The Early Childhood Education Clearinghouse (ERIC/ECE) distributes a quarterly newsletter ($2.00 - 4 issues) which reports on new programs and publications, and RIE documents of special interest. For a complete list of ERIC/ECE Publications, or if you would like to subscribe to the Newsletter write: Publications Office/IREC, College of Education, University of Illinois, 805 West Pennsylvania Avenue, Urbana, Illinois 61801. All orders must be accompanied by check or money order, payable to the University of Illinois. Sorry, we cannot bill.

ERIC CLEARINGHOUSES--CURRENT ADDRESSES

CAREER EDUCATION
204 Gabel Hall
Northern Illinois University
DeKalb, Illinois 60115

COUNSELING AND PERSONNEL SERVICES
The University of Michigan
School of Education Building
Room 2108, East Univ. & South Univ. Streets
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104

THE DISADVANTAGED
Teachers College, Box 40
Columbia University
New York, New York 10027

*EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION
University of Illinois
805 W. Pennsylvania Ave.
Urbana, Illinois 61801

EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT
University of Oregon
Eugene, Oregon 97403

HANDICAPPED AND GIFTED
The Council for Exceptional Children
1920 Association Drive
Reston, Virginia 22091

HIGHER EDUCATION
George Washington University
1 Dupont Circle, Suite 630
Washington, D.C. 20036

INFORMATION RESOURCES
School of Education, SCRDT
Stanford University
Stanford, California 94305

JUNIOR COLLEGES
University of California
96 Powell Library
Los Angeles, California 90024

LANGUAGES AND LINGUISTICS
The Center for Applied Linguistics
1611 N. Kent St.
Arlington, Va. 22209

READING AND COMMUNICATION SKILLS
National Council of Teachers of English
1111 Kenyon Road
Urbana, Illinois 61801

RURAL EDUCATION AND SMALL SCHOOLS
New Mexico State University, Box 3AP
Las Cruces, New Mexico 88003

SCIENCE, MATHEMATICS, AND ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION
Ohio State University
1800 Cannon Drive, 400 Lincoln Tower
Columbus, Ohio 43221

SOCIAL STUDIES/SOCIAL SCIENCE EDUCATION
855 Broadway
Boulder, Colorado 80302

TEACHER EDUCATION
1 Dupont Circle N.W., Suite 616
Washington, D.C. 20036

TESTS, MEASUREMENT AND EVALUATION
Educational Testing Service
Princeton, New Jersey 08540

*ERIC/ECE is responsible for research documents on the physiological, psychological, and cultural development of children from birth through age eight, with major focus on educational theory, research and practice related to the development of young children.